Status of Implementation of recommendations contained in the Twenty-first Report of Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GREIVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): Sir, on behalf of Shri Priyaranjan Dasmunsi, I beg to lay a statement regarding status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Twenty-first Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology.

Clarifications on Statement by Minister regarding issue of Pesticide contamination in soft drinks

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, for giving me this opportunity.

Sir, the hon, Minister has made a very elaborate statement. But, even than, it is a matter of concern for all of us that in the soft drinks which are being sold in the market, the Coca-cola and all other soft drinks, the contaminated water was found. Even the organic chemicals are found, which is beyond the permissible limit. The hon. Minister has also stated that this is on the basis of the carbonated water which need to have a specification, and according to the standards fixed by the Government, it should be a packaged drinking water because the packaged drinking water is a safe drinking water, the water that has been a purified drinking water. But, unfortunately, we have found that in most of the States and in the outlets, the water used by the various agencies for supplying these soft drinks is not up to the required standard. But, unfortunately the authorities concerned have not taken any action so far.

Sir, it is heartening to note that the same issue of the contamination and also the chemical residue that was found in the sample was raised in 2003. The issue was raised in this august House and also Lok Sabha. The hon. Members had expressed their concern about it and the then hon. Minister also gave an assurance in this august House that the Government will monitor it. Sir, there was a demand in 2003 itself to ban those soft drinks which have got the contaminated material, *i.e.,* chemical

organic material. Now, Sir, the JPC also went into the matter. It gave its finding. On the basis of the findings given by the JPC in 2003. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what follow-up action the Ministry has taken. Sir, why I am saying all this is because the issue is very important. In 2003, the same issue was raised and the JPC went into the matter. It gave certain recommendations. It has come out with certain findings on the carbonated water, the water that is being used in the soft drinks. It found that there is organic material in soft drinks, and they have given certain recommendations. To my mind, these recommendations of the JPC are not followed in letter and spirit. Therefore, we have found that in 2006, the same issue is arising again. Sir, now, we find, various States, whether it is Delhi, whether it is Karnataka or whether it is Kerala—almost all the States—have started banning the soft drinks in their institutions like in hospitals, in schools, etc. They have started doing it. Now, Sir, on the basis of the report given by the CSE, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the amount of health hazard that is involved in it. Let the hon. Minister tell us whether it is going to be a silent killer. Sir, the Soft drinks are also available in western countries. The people are drinking soft drinks in western countries as well. Do you have a comparative analysis as to what is the standard that has been prescribed for supplying soft drinks by these companies in those countries *vis-a-vis* the standards prescribed for supplying soft drinks by these companies in our country? What is the standard that has been prescribed in our country? This is what I would like to know.

Secondly, Sir, sometimes, it is supplied in tin, sometimes it is supplied in bottles, and, sometimes, they put it in a container and add the mixture that is coming from the concerned company whether it is Pepsi or Coco Cola or any other company and supply it in the market. This is the way in which it is being supplied in the market. I would like to know whether any mechanism is being followed to check it. Who has been checking it? The concentrate is being received and then that concentrate is put into the water. Now, nobody knows as to which type of water they are using.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay; you wind up now.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, this is a very serious matter. It is a matter of concern for the whole country.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I agree. But you have to seek only clarifications.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, I used to take Coca-Cola. Therefore, I am more concerned about it. I want to know whether I would die within a short period of time if I continue to consume it even thereafter. This is what I would like to know from the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. JOTHI (Tamil Nadu): Don't consume it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: If you are all interested in my health and my survival, kindly tell the hon. Minister that the substances that are coming have to be standardised, regularised. The norms prescribed by the Government in this regard have to be followed. Sir, what is happening is, if we go to manufacturing units, be it Coca-Cola or Pepsi, in any State, we find that there is no checking mechanism, either of the State machinery or Central Government machinery. People consume whatever they produce and send to the market, assuming that it is of a good quality.

Then, Sir, this has been found in 2003 and now, in 2006. The hon. Minister conveniently says that a committee has been constituted. The Government, the hon, Minister, says that a committee has been constituted; then, what is the sanctity of the report of the Standing Committee? The Standing Committee held discussions with experts, with the people concerned, and after that, came out with the findings in 2003 itself. That needs to be followed in letter and spirit. But, far from that, as per the hon. Minister another committee has been constituted. We are not going to solve the problem by constituting a committee. The hon. Minister has studied Medicine; he knows the health hazards; he knows about the human body. By constituting a committee, they would go once again to various places; they would go to the Hyderabad Laboratory and the Ahmedabad Laboratory, and come out with a report. Then, it will go to the wastebasket. No decision will be taken.

Sir, the lobby of the soft drinks companies is very powerful. I would like to bring to the notice of this august House the Kind of advertisements they bring out and the amount of money they spend on advertisements. I would like to request the hon. Minister to take a stern action. If he feels that the report given by analysts is wrong, he must tell us that it is wrong. If the analysts' reports is correct, as brought out in the 2003 findings, Kindly let us know. Now, the report has been submitted by the expert

group; kindly arrive at a decision, but please, don't send it to a committee. The committee will take two more years and in the mean time, the health of the people would be affected.

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, an alarming situation has been expressed by the hon. Health Minister. The point that needs to be noted is that 57 samples of 11 brands have been taken from across 12 States, and all the samples have proved to be bad. This has been mentioned in the first paragraph.

Sir, this is a very serious matter. The study reports presence of pesticide residues in all the samples. So, there is not doubt about the fact that the samples have been proved to be injurious, at least, for the time being. Under the circumstances, what would be the follow-up action? It is not that the Government is lacking in power. Section 7 of the Food Adulteration Act is very clear about suspending the sales, banning the commodity and stopping it from reaching the market, for a while. Some judgements say that this period can be safely extended upto six months. So, the power is not lacking; the Central Government or the State Government can issue orders banning the food items for a while; Section 7 is very clear about that.

Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he would exercise that option, or wait for the report of the committee to come, and then, diffuse the situation in. Some people would say a thing, some would say something else, and then, we all would forget about it. Which course are you going to adopt? Are you going to exercise the powers already available with you under Section 7? There is a *prima facie* case; it is clearly known; all the samples have been found to be bad, in all the 12 states. What is required further? It is not a benchmark! The 'benchmark' is full. All samples are bad. That means, there is a defect in the manufacture. Our health is more important.

Some States may not take up the issue seriously. Statements have come from some States saying that they would not ban. Kerala has gone way ahead by banning manufacture itself; they stand first now. Karnataka has banned their sale within educational institutions; it is not to be sold in the area. In the Parliament, we have banned it; now it is not available in Parliament. We have taken care of our own health; are we not supposed to take care of the health of the other citizens of this country? When

Members of Parliament are protected, we must all the more protect the health of the public. So, we should ban it throughout India till we get the findings. I am not against any company, but I want the health of the public to be assured. So, till such time, as a safety measure, it must be banned. After all, they are not going to end up as paupers tomorrow morning; they are all very rich people and can withstand the circumstances.

They can withstand. Who has asked them to manufacture it defectively? Not me. So, let them face it. After all, you seal the premises of small vendors; you prosecute them for small offences; you keep committee to go behind them and then you evaluate them. Then, after two years, three years or six months, this issue will be closed and some other issue will crop up. My appeal to the hon. Minister is to be more careful for the health of our country. Will you exercise Section 7 of the Food Adulteration Act for banning the item?

श्री सुरेश भारद्वाज (हिमाचल प्रदेश): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, हम सभी जानते हैं कि 1977 में कोका कोला को हिन्दुस्तान से बाहर का रास्ता दिखा दिया गया था, लेकिन बाज़ारीकरण के युग में फिर से कोका कोला और पैप्सी कोला हिन्दुस्तान में सबसे पहले आए हैं।

माननीय मंत्री जी ने अपनी स्टेटमेंट में इसके चार इन्ग्रीडिऐंट्स बताए हैं। पहला तो इसमें 86%-92% वॉटर है, दूसरा 5%-10% शुगर है, तीसरा कंसन्ट्रेट और चौथा अदर दैन कंसन्ट्रेट, अर्थात् अन्य इन्ग्रीडिऐंट्स हैं। पहले तो मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि यह जो कंसन्ट्रेट है, यह क्या चीज़ है? क्या इसी में पैस्टीसाइट्स होते हैं? क्या सरकार इसके बारे में कुछ जानती है? कोका कोला और पैप्सी कोला की जो मैनेजमैंट्स हैं, क्या इसके बारे में वे आपको बताने के लिए तैयार हैं? माननीय मंत्री महोदय इसके संबंध में जानकारी देने की कृपा करें?

मेरा दूसरा प्रश्न यह है कि वैसे तो यह सारा पानी ही है और इसमें कुछ कंसन्ट्रेट है। पैस्टीसाइट्स सीएसई, वर्ष 2003 में भी इसी लैबॉरिटरी में निकाले गए थे और इसी लैबॉरिटरी में उन्होंने इसकी स्टडी की थी। इसके बाद जेपीसी बनी और जेपीसी ने कुछ सुझाव भी दिए। उन सुझावों के ऊपर आज तक भी क्या कोई इम्प्लिमेंटेशन हुआ है या नहीं हुआ?

फूड ऐडल्ट्रेशन ऐक्ट के अन्दर जिस प्रकार के रूल्स बने हैं, उनके अंतर्गत क्या कभी केन्द्रीय सरकार अथवा किसी राज्य सरकार ने इन पैप्सी कोला, कोका कोला अथवा अन्य ठंडे पेय पदार्थों के बॉटलिंग प्लांट्स, फैक्टरीज़ या उनके रिटेल आउटलेट्स में से कोई सैम्पल लिए हैं। अगर उनमें गलती पाई गई, तब क्या उसके आधार पर इस कानून के अंतर्गत आज तक उनके खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही की गई या नहीं?

हमने पार्लियामेंट के दोनों सदनों की ज्वांइट पार्लियामेंटरी कमेटी बनाई। उसके सुझावों के ऊपर मिनिस्ट्री कोई भी काम नहीं करती है, मंत्रालय कोई भी ऐक्शन नहीं लेता है और अब एक नई ऐक्सपर्ट्स की कमेटी बना दी गई है। हो सकता है कि इसकी रिपोर्ट को भी सरकार अथवा मंत्रालय माने या न माने। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या सरकार एवं मंत्रालय के ऊपर इन बड़ी-बड़ी मल्टीनैशनल कम्पनीज़ का दबाव इतना अधिक है कि आज भी जब 17% से ज्यादा पैस्टीसाइड्स इनमें मिल रहे हैं और केवल हिन्दुस्तान के बच्चों का ही नहीं, देश की सारी जनता का स्वास्थ्य दांव पर लगा हुआ है, माननीय मंत्री जी यहां पर बैठे हुए हैं, क्या आप इन पेय पदार्थों पर रोक लगाने का विचार करेंगे या नहीं करेंगे? अगर नहीं तो क्यों?

तीसरी बात मैं यह पूछना चाहूंगा कि जिस प्रकार से इन पेय पदार्थों का एडवर्टाइज़मेंट किया जा रहा है, अभी माननीय नारायणसामी जी ने भी इसकी चर्चा की, कहा जाता है कि बहुत बड़े-बड़े ऐक्टर एवं ऐक्ट्रैसिज़ जैसे शाहरुख़ खान, आमिर खान, करिश्मा कपूर इत्यादि यह दिखाते हुए बताए जाते हैं कि इनको पीने से इन्सान बहुत सुन्दर और बहुत ताक़तवर बन जाता है। इस प्रकार के ऐडवर्टाइज़मेंट्स हमारे टीवी चैनल्स, रेडियो एवं अखबारों में दिखाए जा रहे हैं। क्या मंत्री महोदय उन्हें बैन करने का कोई प्रयास करेंगे अथवा इसके लिए कोई कानून लाएंगे। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या वह जेपीसी की रिपोर्ट के बाद ऐक्शन लेंगे और ऐक्शन के आधार पर इस सदन को अवगत कराएंगे ...(व्यवधान)

श्री उपसभापति: वह तो आपने कह दिया है, आप छोड़िए ... (**व्यवधान**) आप रिपीट कर रहे हैं।

श्री सुरेश भारद्वाज: आज जरूरत जेपीसी की रिपोर्ट पर ऐक्शन लेने की है, न कि नए ऐक्सपर्ट्स ग्रुप्स बनाए जाएं और उनसे रिपोर्ट मांगी जाए। दो-चार वर्ष तो इसी में ही निकल जाएंगे, उसके बाद यह सरकार भी चली जाएगी और फिर यह सारा मामला ही खत्म हो जाएगा।

श्री महेन्द्र मोहन (उत्तर प्रदेश): माननीय उपसभापति जी, यह मामला बहुत ही गंभीर है। हमारी समझ में यह नहीं आता है कि जब 2006 में इसके सैम्पल लिए गए और जब उसके अंदर ये सारी चीजें निकली तो हमारी सरकार ने यह क्यों नहीं जानना चाहा कि यही पेय जब विदेशों में - यूरोप वगैरह में बिकते हैं तो वहां पर पेस्टिसाइड्स क्यों नहीं पाई जाती है। इसका अर्थ है कि यह जो कम्पनियां हैं, वहां पर अपने मापदंडों को दूसरा रखती हैं और यहां पर मापदंडों को दूसरा रखती हैं और इसका एक ही कारण हो सकता है कि वे यहां पर अधिक पैसा कमाने के लिए अपने स्टेंडर्ड को नीचे गिरा देती हैं। इन बातों को सामने रखते हुए माननीय उपसभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यही जानना चाहूंगा कि क्यों नहीं हम यह जानना चाहते हैं कि क्या मापदंड हैं जो यूरोप और अमेरिका में इन पेय पदार्थों में लगाए जाते हैं? क्या हमारे यहां

उन्ही मानदंडों पर ये पेय पदार्थ नहीं बनाए जाते और अगर नहीं बनाए जाते हैं, तो जैसा कि माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा है कि हम लोग इस पर रोक क्यों नहीं लगाते हैं? हम लोगों ने धूम्रपान पर रोक लगाई है। उसमें हम लिखते हैं - Injurious to Health तो अगर वास्तव में ये इस प्रकार की इंज्यूरियस चीजें हैं तो हम इसके लिए भी आवश्यक करें और उसके ऊपर भी लिखा जाए - Injurious to Health ताकि हम लोग अपने आने वाले नौजवानों को बचा सकें। धन्यवाद।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy. Please, raise new points.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I will raise all the new points. I will not repeat. Sir, during the last week only, we had passed a Bill called the Food Safety and Standards Bill. At that time also, we made a request to the hon. Minister that it would be better if the Health Minister had piloted the Bill. That was our suggestion and at that time also, we raised this point. I would like to know from the hon. Minister while some States like Kerala have banned it in entire State; Karnataka and some other States have partly banned it - in educational institutions and hospitals. To my utter surprise, yesterday, from my own State, the Health Minister, having not the hon. Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, stated that he was not having any power to ban such drinks. Officially, he went on record saying that the State had no power, and he also cited the example that when *Ghutka* was banned in Andhra Pradesh, the Supreme Court held that it was the Parliament which had to make laws, not State Governments. That was the example cited by him. Is it a fact? If it is a fact, the hon. Minister must guide the State Governments in this regard. These things should be uniform. One State cannot take a view, which is different from other States' view. I am at a loss to understand the situation and its legality also. How can there be different views, different interpretations?

SHRI N. JOTHI: A State Government has the power to ban temporarily. The Central Government can ban permanently.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Please, advice my State's Health Minister.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jothi, you are assisting the Minister.

SHRI N. JOTHI: That is why, in the case of *Ghutka*, permanent banning is incorrect.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, this was the statement made by the Health Minister of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. I may kindly be enlightened about this by the Union Health Minister. The second point is that we already have JPC. If my remembrance goes in correct, the present Agriculture Minister was the Chairman of that JPC, and the recommendations of the Committee are there. You are going in for another Committee. I want to know whether any time-bound programme has been given to this Expert Committee. When I read the Statement, there is no time stipulation provided for submission of report and follow-up action. And, there is already a Standing Committee Report. So many reports are there - Standing Committee, JPC, and now, another Expert Committee has been constituted. So many Committees will only lead to confusion. Finally, we may end up with a new committee to go into the working of these committees. So, this is a very serious issue concerning crores of people and many people are engaged in the business who are playing with the health of students and small children. On these points. I would request the hon. Minister to enlighten us.

SHRI C. PERUMAL (Tamil Nadu): My question is general. For good health and good wealth, is there any proposal to introduce 'Palm ta' and 'Palm Cola' instead of Coca Cola and Pepsi all over India?

प्रो॰ राम देव भंडारी (बिहार): माननीय उपसभापति जी, इस कोल्ड ड्रिंक्स के माध्यम से हम अपने देशवासियों को ठंडा पेय नहीं पिला रहे हैं, बल्कि जहर पिला रहे हैं। तीन वर्ष पहले भी सीएसई की रिपोर्ट आई थी और ज्वाइंट पार्लियामेंट्री कमेटी बैठी थी। उसकी रिपोर्ट भी आई, लेकिन उस पर कोई कार्यवाही नहीं हुई। अब फिर इसी प्रकार की रिपोर्ट आई है। उपसभापति महोदय, विज्ञापन का युग है, टी॰ वी॰ के माध्यम से जो विज्ञापन आते हैं, उनका सबसे ज्यादा असर हमारे देश के बच्चों पर पड़ता है, हमारे देश के छात्रों पर पड़ता है। कोल्ड ड्रिंक्स भी ज्यादा वे ही पीते हैं। हमारे देश के बच्चे, कल देश के भविष्य होंगे, हम उनको जहर पिला रहे हैं।

उपसभापति महोदय, बहुत stern action की जरूरत है। कई राज्यों में कार्यवाही हुई है। एक सदस्य ठीक कह रहे थे अब कमेटी की बात नहीं है। कोई दूसरी कमेटी बनती भी है, तो वह टाइम-बाउंड होनी चाहिए। टाइम-बाउंड होने के बाद, उस पर कार्यवाही करने की जरूरत है। हम इसको बर्दाश्त नहीं करेंगे कि हमारे देश के बच्चों को विदेशी कम्पनियां जहर पिलाये, जो हमारे भविष्य हैं, उनको हम अभी से बर्बाद करना शुरू करें। धन्यवाद।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shrimati S. G. Indira. No political questions. Mr. Jothi has honoured his commitment. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, are now discussing a serious matter. Sir, till now, the State of Tamil Nadu has not banned it whereas the neighbouring State, Kerala has banned it immediately. The State of Karnataka has also banned It.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, this is politics. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: No, no. I am not politicising the issue. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not much politics.. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Sir, the hon. Minister himself hails from Tamil Nadu. Why does he not take care of this aspect? This is my question. Thank you.

श्री मंगनी लाल मंडल (बिहार): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, मैं एक ही प्रश्न माननीय मंत्री से पूछना चाहूंगा। यह बात ठीक है कि जो सॉफ्ट ड्रिंक्स है, यह सारे देश के नौनिहालों के बीच में जहर बांट रही है। मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा कि सेंटर फार साइंस एंड एनवायरमेंट का दो बार प्रतिवेदन आया है। पहली बार प्रतिवेदन आया तो सरकार ने जेपीसी बैठाई। इसकी रिपोर्ट आई, इसके बारे में माननीय मंत्री जी ने सिर्फ यह कहा है कि जांच कमेटी बैठा दी गई है। कब बैठाई है, क्या प्रतिफल आया है, क्या निष्कर्ष आया है, इसके बारे में माननीय मंत्री जी ने प्रतिवेदन में कुछ नहीं कहा है। चूंकि मैं वी॰ नारायणसामी जी की बात का समर्थन करता हूं, इसलिए कमेटी मात्र बैठा देने से, एक के बाद दूसरी कमेटी बैठा देने से समस्या का समाधान नहीं होगा। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि यह कमेटी कब बैठी, कब निष्कर्ष आया? दूसरी बार जब प्रतिवेदन आया, तो सरकार ने, सरकार के माननीय मंत्री ने जबाव दिया है कि हम इस पर कार्यवाही करेंगे। चन्द्रशेखर रेड्डी जी ने जो फूड सेफ्टी बिल पास हुआ है, उसकी चर्चा की है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि कोका कोला, पेप्सी कोला को रेगुलेट करने के लिए, नियमित करने के लिए कौन सा कानून है और अभी तक उस कानून ने प्रभावकारी तरीके से काम किया है या नहीं किया है? अगर नहीं किया है, तो क्या सरकार इसको रेगुलेट करने के लिए, नियमित करने के लिए कोई विधेयक, कोई बिल सदन में लाना चाहती है?

सरकार ने विधान चन्द्र कृषि विश्वविद्यालय, मोहनपुर, कोलकाता की रिपोर्ट की प्रतीक्षा की बात कही है। मैं सरकार से यह अंतिम सवाल पूछना चाहता हूं कि जब तक किसी अंतिम निष्कर्ष पर सरकार नहीं पहुंच जाती है तब क्या अस्थाई तौर पर सारे देश में पेप्सी कोला, कोका कोला को प्रतिबंधित करना चाहती है और इसके विज्ञापन पर रोक लगाना चाहती है?

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद (बिहार): उपसभापति महोदय, पानी की तरह पेप्सी कोला और कोका कोला को दूर-दूर, सुदूर गांव में यूज़ किया जा रहा है। लोग इनको लेने के बाद बीमार पड़ रहे हैं, उनको तकलीफ भी हो रही है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि किस हालत में, इस पार्लियामेंट में, किस हालत में केरल में, इसको बंद कर दिया गया है? कौन सी परिस्थिति है कि जब तक रिपोर्ट नहीं आ जाती है तब तक आपको इसे पूरे देश में बंद करने में लाचारी है?

दूसरा, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि फूड एडल्ट्रेशन एक्ट के अनुसार क्या एक भी बोतल का सैम्पल लेकर के उनको प्रोसिक्युट किया गया है कि आपका उसमें स्टैंडर्ड लागू नहीं होता है? क्या ऐसा कुछ किया गया है, यह मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं?

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister when there is already a report available, why should there be any Committee for that?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him say please. A number of hon. Members have raised this issue.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): Sir, I would firstly like to thank the hon. Members of Parliament who have raised certain issues from the *suo motu* Statement made by me. I have made this statement because I want to clarify to the hon. Members and to the country about issues pertaining to these recent episodes which stem from the study of the Centre for Science and Environment, their Report, 'Soft Drinks - Hard Truth II". I have laready stated in my Statement that certain samples were lifted from different parts of the country, and 57 of them were found to have contents of pesticide residues. In fact, this *suo motu* Statement, I have been wanting to make for the last three or four days, but due to frequent adjournments, I could not have that opportunity. In my Statement, I have clarified what are the steps that the Government has taken, from the JPC Report of 2003 and what process we are going through. I will be clarifying on our hon. Members' queries.

Sir, firstly, as in my Statement, after the JPC's Report that standards should be fixed for these carbonated drinks, namely, Coke, Pepsi or other subsequent drinks, India was one of the first countries in the world, one of the first countries in the world to fix standard for carbonated drinks. that is way back in 1955 itself, they have fixed it. And some countries in

the world still have not fixed any standards for these carbonated drinks. Subsequently, there have been a lot of amendments to the rules and regulations of these standards and it was subsequently amended a number of times through the prevalent situation at that point of time. Then, this issue, about the contamination of carbonated drinks, namely, Pepsi or Coke or other drinks, was raised by the JPC, and like I have said in my statment, the JPC have gone into the report and said that literally 86 to 92 per cent of the content of carbonated drinks is water and literally 5 to 10 per cent is sugar and rest are the concentrates. Let me take these three issues. For the water content of these colas or these carbonated drinks, we have standards fixed. Why back in 2004 itself, we have notified the standards saying that the water used in these carbonated drinks should be of the standards of packaged drinking water where it clearly stipulates that there should not be pesticide residues for individual not more than .001 ppm per litre and for a combination of that entire drink, it should not be more than .0005 ppms, which ultimately is literally negligible. Today, the onus on the manufacturer is that water should be very pure. The water which should be used in manufacturing of these carbonated drinks should be pure, without any pesticides, in fact, let us say, .0005 ppms per litre, which to test it itself is very difficult. Sir, coming to the second part, that is the sugar concentrate, which comprises 5 to 10 per cent of these drinks, the JPCs at the point of time itself said that sugar should go through the distillation process and it would be rare that there would be any pesticide residue in sugar content. They have said, fix up standards for sugar. We have set up a Committee at that point of time under Dr. Ganguli, the Director-General, ICMR, and these were three or four more associates from different institutions for assisting him in that process. Sir, worldwide, like the JPC itself has said, there are not fixed standards for these carbonated drinks or colas. There are no fixed global standards. Each country fixes these according to its local requirement, and that is what the JPC asked us, the Government, to do.This Committee had gone on tour to get the standardisation and the formulation of how to go about fixing standards for sugar, because this was new entity. The Committee had to go around the world, not around the world, but, least, go around linking to the world communities, especially the European or the American or the developed countries, and try to fix mandate for fixing standards of sugar content.

Finally, in due course to time, they had, in fact, tested, as a preliminary test, about 200 samples all over the country. They went to coca-cola retailers, to the factories, and, in fact, to the manufacturing areas. Since the crushing season goes from November to February, there were lots of other processes involved in that. *Prima facie* they found that there were no pesticides in sugar content. We have to be more sure because you know about today's legislation. We have to be very strong from the legal point of view. That is why I would like to inform the hon. Members that the Committee is not a way of deviating from the issues. Personally, I am very involved in this issue; passionately I am very involved in this issue. And as far as the Goverment is concerned, I am very concerned about the safety of consumers. So, it has to stand the legal framework. I don't want to get some stay somewhere. And then we have to go through all the process again. Like the case of *Gutkha* which happened. I don't want to go into that. So, that is why, we are going through more sensitive tests which will be done in a matter of one or maybe 2-3 months maximum. We will be getting a standard for sugar.

On concentrate, some of my friends here said: "What is there is the concentrate?" Sir, this concentrate is the formulation of the manufacturers. It is their formula. The onus is on the formulation of the manufacturers. It is their formula. The onus is on the manufacturer that there should not be any pesticide residue in the formulations. They say that these concentrates and the same formula are being used in different parts of the world. Ultimately, today, the onus is one the manufacturers. Manufacturers can't say that standards are not there. It is just purely a question of sugar. It has already been said that it goes through a process and the amount of pesticides is negligible. It has already been proven by our testing in the Kolkata lab *prima facie*. So, the onus is on the manufacturers. They have to provide uncotaminated carbonated beverages to the consumers of this country. It any of these manufacturers don't do that, I am sure, under the law, they could be penalised under different sections of the PEA Act.

There are two different issues involved in this matter of carbonated drinks. It is not only about carbonated drinks. Carbonated drinks are just one part of it. The main part of this issue is the health problems, health issues related to consuming these carbonated drinks. It has not only to do with these carbonated drinks, it has to do with junk food also. The hon. Members should enlighten the public about this. The Government

is playing its active role in enlightening the people of this country. Take the context of junk food, which is inclusive of carbonated drinks. Today, we see young childen and people in the age group of 23-24 years getting heart attacks. I don't want to digress from the issue, but then it is my responsibility that I have to bring in a wider issue. Then I am going to answer the queries of the hon. Members.

But taking the holistic view, there are two issues today — one is the contamination by pesticides and secondly, the health issue relating to the carbonated drinks and junk food. The junk food comprises all these carbonated drinks, pizzas, burgers, chips etc. All these things are detrimental to our society and we hear 23-24 year old children getting heart attacks and are dying. We don't want a situation of that kind to arise in future. That is why the Ministry and the Government are very keenly taking interest in asking these children — these youngsters, younger generation — to avoid taking this holistic junk food which comprises these carbonated drinks. That is why, Sir, we have already sent advisories through the Ministry of HRD and through the respective State Governments. I am also writing to the Health Ministers as well as the Chief Ministers of the States to send out more advisories to the educational institutions — both public and private — and to the public institutions and wherever possible, to the State Governments that these are detrimental to the health of the society, not only to the younger people, but to the general population at large. This is the awareness which is being created on the health aspect.

Pesticide aspect is regulatory phenomenon. We have a regulatory mechanism. We have an Act — the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act; and the onus is definitely on both the Governments — the State Governments and the Central Government. Today, lifting of samples and testing completely lies with the State Government. I am not shying away from my responsibility. Definitely, the Government is responsible; the Central Government is responsible ultimately. But, then, we have a mechanism of functioning. We have been faithfully writing every year, in fact, in due course of time, throughout the year that the State Government have to lift samples. Sir, we are not looking only at coke here. We are looking at water samples; We are looking at milk samples; we are looking at samples of fruits and vegetables getting adulterants and contaminants, which could be pesticides or other adulterants could also be there. We

are asking the State Governments to lift these samples from different parts of the country periodically, test them and keep abreast of the knowledge of the Central Government. Some States do and some States don't do. But, then again, we keep writing to them because they have the mechanism, the infrastructure of testing, they have their food inspectors and they have their labs. We share their labs and their men to go through the testing.

Sir, somebody raised an issue relating to the steps that we have taken for both these issues, like I said, the contaminated issue as well as the health issue. After the recent episode, we have not waited for the State Governments to do something. In fact, we have been asking the State Governments to do it. We have asked them to reply. We also went around, testing, lifting samples of not only these carbonated drinks, but also water, milk, fruits, vegetables and all the other issues. Of course, the Indian Council of Medical Research has ben asked to do a study on the ill effects of junk food, whole of junk food. I think, the study will take a little time, may be, two to three years. But, nevertheless, the WHO has been advising the Government that the health problems of the future are going to be the chronic diseases, cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, strokes, mental health disorders and cancer whch we are going to take on and there is correlation between junk food and these things, life-style diseases....(*interruptions)*... I am coming to your point. (*Interruptions*)..

SHRI N. JOTHI: You speak on the point. He is giving a lecture. ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री उपसभापति: आप बैठिए, आप बैठिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सुरेश भारद्वाज: सर, सॉफ्ट ड्रिंक्स में पेस्टीसाइड है। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Please confine yourself to ...(*Interruptions*)... He can go to some seminar and say all these things.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: * if you don't want to hear me. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, please ...(*Interruptions*)... No, no ..(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Jothi, one minute. The hon. Health Minister is, no doubt, addressing the issue of cola and also explaining the menace of the junk food. That is all right. But, now, probably, you can come to the specific issues which are being raised here.

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*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, to get into those issues, I have to enlighten the hon. Members that these are the issues which they are going to face in future, and if he does not want to hear, *

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no; he has already sat down. Why are you saying so? ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: If he does not want to hear the problems which the country is going to face in future, I am sorry for that. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please listen to me. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: I am sorry for that. ...(*Interruptions*)... If you do not have the energy to listen to the problem that the country is going to face in future, I pity you. ...(*Interruptions*)... I pity him. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is taking the House into confidence. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Very good, Sir, ...(*Interruptions*)... Finally, you are going to tell us that you are not going to ban them; I know that. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: I am coming to that. .....(*Interruptions*)... I am coming to that. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: The State Government should control. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He will come to that. Why are you interrupting him? ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, I know this very well that he is not going to ban.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no; please don't come to that conclusion. That is not proper. The debate is going on well. ...(*Interruptions*)... Please have some patience to hear him. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Please don't bring Tamil Nadu politics here. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, I have already said that I have noted the queries of all the Members. I am coming to these queries one by one. I will be answering all these queries. But I do need to tell the House, and to the country also, what sort of problems we are going to

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

face in future; it is my responsibility. This is not the only issue, but there are also a lot of other issues involved in that, and it is my duty to bring them to your notice. If Mr. Jothi does not have the patience to sit here, then I pity him. * if he does not have the patience ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, he says * ...(*Interruptions*)... How can he say that? ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI C. PERUMAL: Sir, who is he to say that? ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why does he say so? ...(*Interruptions*)... He cannot say that. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, he has said that. He cannot say that. ...(*Interruptions*)... Who is he to say all this? ...(*Interruptions*)... How can he say that? I am sorry, Sir. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, he should have the patience to listen to the reply. ...(*Interruptions*)... If you do not have the patience, I say. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no, no. ...(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Jothi, this is a very important national issue. ...(*Interruptions*)... One minute. ...(*Interruptions*)... One minute. ...(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Jothi, please sit down.

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, he said 'he should have the patience; otherwise, * ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, he is interrupting him again and again. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, please sit down. ...(*Interruptions*)... Please sit down, Mr. Jothi. ...(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Perumal, please sit down.

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, how can he say that?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jothi, nobody can say that. ...(*Interruptions*)... Nobody can say that. ...(*Interruptions*)... That is said in a lighter vein; you take it like this.

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, please see the records.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will see the records. ...(*Interruptions*)... Nobody has the right to say; even the Chair will not say. ...(*Interruptions*)... I will look into it. If he said that * you take it in a lighter vein, and I will remove that. ...(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Narayanasamy, Mr. Perumal, please

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

6.00 A.M.

sit down. ...(*Interruptions*)... One minute. ...(*Interruptions*)... One minute. ...(*Interruptions*)... You see, the whole nation is concerned about this. People are watching what decision the country. ...(*Interruptions*)... When the Chair is speaking, you must have the courtesy to listen to him. ...(*Interruptions*)... The whole nation is watching as to what is going to happen; everybody is concerned, even the children are concerned, how is it that some States have banned and some States have not banned. And there is a concern. So, it is an important issue. Let us take it in all seriousness. It is all right that you may differ with the Minister or the Minister may differ with you; that is not very important. It is not important. Let us not create any controversy. Otherwise, in this controversy, the important issue will be forgotten. Please carry on, Mr. Minister.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Thank you, Sir. Like I have been saying earlier that the issue is the health issue and the Government has been propagating these health issues, this pesticide issue is a regulatory issue, a short-term issue. The health issue is going to be a long-term issue; that is why, we have to make holistic policies, and that is why, I am trying to create a little bit of awareness. To say that the statement was a *suo motu* statement, the statement made by me, ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, that is not correct. ...(*Interruptions*)... Sir, the Speaker has asked him to submit the report. It is not a *suo motu* statement. He was compelled to make a statement. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is all right, but to say that ...(*Interruptions*)... In fact, you are bringing politics. ...(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Jothi looking into the larger aspect of it, not on every word, you go on interrupting the Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: It is not a charity. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: In this House, it is a *suo motu* statement. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, please sit down. ...(*Interruptions*)... I would like to know from the hon. Members whether you are interested to discuss this issue.

SHRI N. JOTHI: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then what the Minister says and what you say are not important. ...(*Interruptions*)... It is for the Chair to regulate.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

You can talk only with permission. That is the rule. I need not remind you because you know that. When I have permitted the hon. Minister to make a statement, no Member has any right to interrupt. I may allow you here and there just for creating some interest. But that doesn't mean you can go on like this. Please don't do it. ...(*Interruptions*)... Let him complete. Whatever the Minister wants to say, let him complete. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Then you give me a chance after he completes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: As I mentioned on the health issues, the sugar content is more harmful from the long-term aspects than the pesticide residues in these things. I don't know how many people know this. This is the awareness which I am creating not only in the House but also in the entire country that we have a situation here, we have a problem here, and that problem is not only due to pesticides issue but also due to the wider health issue. The quantum of sugar in the so-called carbonated products, say, 5%-10%, is more dangerous than the pesticides contained in these carbonated drinks. I am trying to bring out the health problems and that is why we need to take a holistic view on this. The House needs to deliberate more on this issue. I am not shying away from responsibility. That is why I am coming to the point and saying that we need to have good agricultural practices, etc. There are other issues which are involved in this. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will be taken up later. We can discuss it later. But let us come to the point.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Having said all these things, the Government has taken steps to deal with both the issues, one is a regulatory mechanism for the pesticides or contaminants issue and the second is the wider issue of health, not only of carbonated drinks but also junk foods because this is the way our children are going and every day their health is falling by eating these things.

Sir, coming to the issues raised by my hon. colleagues here, Mr. Narayanasamy has asked about the steps that the Government has taken on the JPC recommendations. As I have already said, after the JPC's recommendations, a Committee has been set up and the Committee will be setting the standards in due course of time, may be, within 3-5 months.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you fixed any time-limit for that Committee?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: It is there.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is an important issue. Just to facilitate the hon. Members, the Report was made in 2003. Now, you have appointed a Committee. Have you fixed a time-limit for the Committee for fixing the standards? There is a concern in the whole country. What is the time-limit that you have fixed for the Committee? That you can say.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: The JPC has told us to look into not only the carbonated drinks issue but also fruit juice, fruits and vegetables and milk, and to set standards for all these products. But as for fruit juice and milk, it is a little bit difficult in our Indian context because they are primary foods and we are using abundant pesticides in our country. Therefore, we have to go in for good agricultural practices. That is a different matter.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But three years is too long a time.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: The JPC has made a lot of recommendations.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is there. But you speak on this issue.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Coming to the issue, in 2004, the Committee has been formed. It is not a new Committee. It has been right there. I have read out the four names. This Committee is there. These experts are the top in the industry. They have gone through that. They are now finalising the Report. By the end of this year or early next year there will be standards fixed for these things.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Till then, what would happen?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: That is why I explained clearly that till today there were no standards. Today, there are standards. There are standards for water, concentrates and sugar also. It is known that there should be no pesticides in sugar. Ultimately, the onus is on the manufacturers. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, there is some crucial thing.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will help you. Mr. Minister, you have made one statement that the onus is on the manufacturers. Now, the Centre for Science and Environment has come out with a report. They have failed. You say that the onus is on the manufacturers. Now what we see is that they have failed. Now, on whom is the onus?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, coming to the CSE report, they have tested samples and they have given a report. Now, another Committee has been set up to give me a report in two week's time on the CSE's report. Sir, the CSE is a reputed organisation. But we do not know what testing they have done; what process of testing they have done whether it has been an NABL accredited laboratory under the law. It is the NABL accredited laboratories which have to go through these processes. There are a lot of processes. You know what are the conditions to test a product. It just can't be tested anywhere, in any lab. We have to have a standard fixed only then will it stand in a court of law. So I have appointed a Committee which will go into the CSE report and give me its recommendations in two week's time and after which we will send advisories and circulatories to States from where they have lifted samples. If the CSE report is positive today that there are pesticide residues, we will be advising the State Governments from where these samples have been lifted in different bottling plants, and saying that this is it and ask them to take action against the respective manufacturers in different States from where these samples have been lifted. We are not waiting only for that, we are also lifting samples from different parts of the country and we are testing them in our labs. In fact, the onus is on the State Governments to do it; under the PFA the State Government has to pick up samples, test them and do these things. Once we get these results, then only we could take a decision as to how under the PFA, we could punish these manufacturers.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How do you address the concern of the common man today?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, just today, in a hurry. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Chair itself is putting questions on your behalf.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, I fully understand the concern of Members not only within the House but outside the House also. Sir, today, if we do anything in a haste, again and again, I am saying, if we just go around in a haste without getting these credentials and facts and figures, it would not stand in a court of law. Definitely, whatever we do, it has to be in a systemic manner. That is why we are going through this scientific process and analysing the whole thing. I am also concerned about it.

The safety of the consumers is my priority. But we have to address these issues in a scientific manner because it has to stand the scrutiny of law. We have to go through that process. Whatever process we are going through, it should be a foolproof process. We can't act in haste.

Coming to Shri Narayanasamy's query about health hazards and whether there is any mechanism to check the colas. Yes, again and again, I have been saying that there have been different mechanisms to check not only colas but other fruit products also. The State Government has to repeatedly and periodically test these samples and give recommendations and feedback to the Central Government. Shri Narayanasamy was saying that don't set up committees which would just go on, on and on. It is not the prerogative of the Government to just set up these committee to delay this process. Whatever we do, it has to be scientific. We already have some instances where we took some decisions and then the courts have reversed our decisions. Because of the lack of scientific data, we had acted in a hurry, we acted in a haste. It is not that the Committees are set up to delay the process. There are expert people in these committees. They are the people who are experts in their fields. We have to get this data, accumulate this data and then we have to go through it. Again, it is the responsibility of the Government to expedite the whole process. I take this responsibility to expedite the whole process. We are going through this process. Sir, personally, before I became a Minister, I have been against these colas and junk food. Because of health reasons involved in it, I have been taking a lot of initiatives on these issues. Today, we have an opportunity to go through it. I am very seriously concerned about it from the consumer point of view. We are very serious about this issue. I had a number of briefings on this issue with my people in the last few months to expedite the whole process. We are going through that process. Sir, responding to Shri Jothi's point, he was concerned about Section 7 and wanted to know whether we can ban these items. Sir as per Section 7 of the PFA Act, it rests with the health authorities of the respective States. In fact, there is a contradictory view in this that the ultimate responsibility is with the Central Government. But, as per this provision, it is the State local authorities which have to act on this issue. But, again, when *Gutka* was banned by some States, the Supreme Court said that it could be only for a short term, maybe, for two years, and the onus for a long-term ban rests with the Central Government. That is why we are going through this process. So, as a short-term measure, if the

State Governments feel that this is detrimental to their people, to the consumers, they have the authority to take decisions under Section 7 of the Act...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: For a maximum period of two years, is it?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: It can be done for a short period of time...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Not only the State Governments, but the Central Government also can put a ban on it for a temporary period as a precautionary measure...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He said that.

SHRI N. JOTHI: I do not know why he is not exercising that power.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Each State Government can do that. We have sent advisories to the State Governments that these are health issues, what decisions they must take, etc.

Shri Suresh Bhardwaj mentioned about the concentrates. He wanted to know whether pesticides are found in the concentrates. I have already said that the formula used in the concentrates is the trademark of the respective companies, and this is being used worldwide. The onus is on these companies to prove that there are no pesticides in the concentrates. Of course, these companies must ensure that there are no pesticides or contaminates in the concentrates...(*Interruptions*)... It is the whole thing that we are testing. It is not a question of sugar content or water content that we look for. We cannot test it individually. We have to test it holistically...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: You have to analyse separately its various constituents. You say that the water used should be a sterilized water. Secondly, you have also done sampling of the sugar content...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you giving standards for these concentrates?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: No; we cannot give a standard...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is the point. The popular perception is that these companies do not show the constituents in the concentrates, and these are not tested. But, from safety point of view, it has to be tested. That is what Mr. Narayanasamy is saying.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Today the concentrate standard is that there should be no pesticides in it.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: How can you presume that?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: That is the responsibility of these companies to see to it that there are no pesticides used in the concentrates.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: You are testing the whole bottle as such. You say, water is being tested and sugar is being tested. Only when you test the concentrates, everything will be complete. Leaving one, you test the remaining two. You should concentrate on the concentrates also...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Mr. Narayanasamy rarely speaks like this.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, let us not make it a party issue. It is in the interest of the whole House. A message should go from Parliament to the people of this country that everybody is concerned. That is why we are discussing this. This is not a party issue.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: As much as all the hon. Members are concerned about, I am even more concerned...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are helping you to take action.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: They are the real consumers of the country. It is not only an issue pertaining to the consumers of this country, but it also concerns the health of the younger generation.

Mr. Bhardwaj also asked whether the Government is under any pressure from any of these companies. I would say, it is definitely, not so, irrespective of howsoever big these companies may be. You all know how the Health Ministry is taking on tobacco. Let us see what we are trying to do with regard to tobacco. The consumers are our main area, and we are really concerned about the health of consumers.

Then, he has raised a query whether advertisements of these products can be banned. Sir, from the health issue, I am coming to this point of advertisement. It is not like, Sir, today we just ban the advertisement of a proprietary food item, and then the product. It is not as simple as that. On the health issues, like, Sir, today, tobacco cannot be advertised, or alcohol cannot be advertised. In fact, today tobacco is being used in this country, and it is more dangerous than these things. ...(*Interruptions*)... I am coming to the point, Sir. We have the Cable and Television Act of 1994. There is a provision in that Act. The Government

is discussing with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting the issue of banning of advertisement, but we have not taken any decision on that. We are just discussing it with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and we have not taken any decision on that, Sir.

Then, Shri Mahendra Mohan wanted to know about the standards in the European countries. Our standards are more stringent than the standards pertaining to these carbonated drinks in the European countries.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But, his point is, whether any pesticide was found in any of these European countries. If so, what is the content of it, what is the percentage of that? See, this discussion has arisen because of the excess content of pesticide. If that is the case, is there any parallel, similar issue in any part of the world on Coca Cola and Pepsi, which is agitating those countries also, or, is it just confining to India? This is what they wanted to know.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, I would like to say that the standards here are more... I understand their concern about that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If this information is not with you right now, you can find it out also.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Yes, Sir, I will find it out. If this issue is worldwide. I will let the hon. Member know about this issue. He was also saying whether it should be mentioned on the bottle or on the package that this product is injurious to health, like he mentioned that tobacco is injurious to health. He wanted to know whether it should mentioned outside the bottle of carbonated drink. Sir, as it is, there should not be any pesticide, any contaminant in this. And, if there is any contaminant, then, they are at fault, they should be penalised. They will be penalised for that.

MR.DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You penalise them. That is what the hon. Members want.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: So, it should not be mentioned then. Of course, Mr. Reddy was asking about the Andhra Pradesh issue, whether the State could ban any product under that. I have already clarified that issue. Again, I would like to say that there is section 7. Under that, if the State Government feels that it is detrimental to consumers ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: My question was simple.

What is your advice to the States?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: They have sent advisories to the States.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: If it is injurious to the people of Kerala, then, why is it not injurious to the people of Andhra and other parts of the country? ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Reddy, the Minister has already clarified that he has sent advisories to all the States ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: I have already clarified this issue...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, there should be uniformity in it ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: On Advisories, there is uniformity.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, nobody is following them. How come Kerala has banned it in the entire State? If it is banned in Kerala, then, why not in Karnataka and Andhra? Why not it be banned in his own State...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You know there is a difference between the direction and the advisory...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, here the consumer is involved. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: The Kerala people will be very healthy and other people will always be in hospitals...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: They cannot take it lightly. ...(*Interruptions*)... The Government is taking this lightly ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Mr. Reddy was asking whether the Committee's tenure would be time-bound. Yes ...(*Interruptions*)... I have already clarified the issue relating to the Committee. Mr. Perumal said something which I could not hear.

SHRI N. JOTHI: He said about Palm Cola ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is an alternate drink! ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Earlier he was the Chairman of the Palm Board. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is a good suggestion

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Yes, Sir, it is a good suggestion. Mr. Bhandary was also concerned about the health of children. Mrs. Indira was enquiring whether this is banned in Tamil Nadu, to which I have already replied that each State could take steps ...(*Interruptions*)... Then, Mr. Madaniji talked about the Kolkata report; whether till such time this could be banned. I would again say that at the end of the year if we are getting the final standard of sugar, we will be having standards altogether. I again say that if the States, even today, could test and see a product not only the carbonated products but also the other products and take a decision commensurate with the testing standards, if there are contamination in that, individual States could definitely take decisions on that.

Mr. Prasad raised general issues that concern this House. I think, these are some of the issues raised by the hon. Members today. I would again like to reiterate. You have been rightly saying that there have been apprehensions in the minds of consumers of this country on this issue...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Address those issues, that is all this House wants.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Yes, Sir, that is why ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, I am not confronting him, but would question him...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: I will answer your queries.

SHRI N. JOTHI: I would like to have a copy of that legislation. Ask your officers to pass on a copy to me.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: I will give you tomorrow.

SHRI N. JOTHI: Please, I would go through it. Do not send it tomorrow, today itself. I want to find out your power, in the Central Government, to ban it. Please give me that legislation, I will show the section immediately. (*Interruptions*) Section 7 I know, it says that the Central Government can take immediate action. The Central Government has got the power.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has not said that the Central Government has no power...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Then why is he not exercising that power? ...(*Interruptions*)... The committee will go into that, another committee will further go into, yet another committee will go into it, and still another committee will come. But, in the meanwhile, he would go What is this, Sir? You are making ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: When you were ruling, why did you not ban it? ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: I will answer it. At that time, there was no pesticide. In your ruling only it has come, Sir. (*Interruptions*) Last week only it has come, and last week we have not demitted the office. We demitted the office in April. (*Interruptions*) We banned it immediately.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You banned it and lifted it too. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: I know what they banned I wanted to fully allay the apprehensions of the consumers of this country by saying that the Government is definitely very serious on this issue. Sir, there are two different issues: contamination and health. Today, the problem of contamination is very much in the news and we have given advisories to the State Governments, to the HRD Ministry. I have written to them. The State Government should also pick up more samples and test them. If found again, they should take decisions on doing away with these products, for the betterment of this country. But, on the whole, the Government of India is also going into the process of setting standards. It is not that we do not have standards today; we have standards, but we are trying to set comprehensive standards.

I personally and as a Minister, am very concerned about the issue and we will be taking all steps to satisfy the consumers of this country.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till 11 a.m. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at twenty-five minutes past six of the clock, till eleven of the clock on Friday, the 11th August, 2006.

MGIPMRND—171RS—10-04-2007.